

PROCEEDINGS OF THE HISTORIC CONSERVATION BOARD

MONDAY, JUNE 26, 2006

3:00 P.M., ON SITE AT 520 READING ROAD

The Historic Conservation Board met at 3:06 P.M., on site at 520 Reading Road, with members Senhauser, Spraul-Schmidt, Sullebarger, Kreider and Raser present. Absent: Bloomfield, Chatterjee and Wallace.

CERTIFICATE OF APPROPRIATENESS, 518, 520 AND 526 READING ROAD, OVER-THE-RHINE HISTORIC DISTRICT

Prior to convening the meeting the Board members were given the opportunity to tour the interior of 520 Reading Road.

Mr. Senhauser stated that the Certificate of Appropriateness for 520 Reading Road was tabled at the June 12, 2006 Historic Conservation Board (Board) meeting to allow Board members the opportunity to tour the property.

Brian Tiffany, President of the Over-the-Rhine Chamber of Commerce, stated that in his experience natural light was very important when selling or renting a unit in Over-the-Rhine, where developers work with a lower profitability margin than other neighborhoods. He supported the renovation and the design as submitted.

Mr. Daspit, project designer, stated he wanted the Board members to understand the natural lighting issues. He stated that he has tried to be sensitive to the historic character of the building and was concerned that if the Board found the design approach unacceptable the project would not proceed.

Michael Sweeney, the project realtor from Comey & Shepherd, stated that the homeownership rate in Over-the-Rhine is one of the lowest in the city and that more homeowners are needed to curb crime and to make it a more viable community. He agreed that additional natural light was necessary to market successfully the building's central units.

In response to a request from Mr. Raser, Mr. Daspit and John Grier, project architect, pointed out the proposed size and location of the proposed second story windows. Mr. Grier stated that twelve saleable units were needed to make the project feasible.

Joe Bley, developer, stated that his company had made many changes from the original design in response to Board suggestions but felt the Board had not been willing to meet him halfway. He reiterated his interest in creating a residential project that blended the old with the new. The project acknowledges its historic tenant, the Noyer Glass Company, through the use of large expanses of glass and by marketing the project as "Glaswerks." Mr. Bley stated that this was his first project in Over-the-Rhine.

Ms. Sullebarger responded the Board agreed to allow the central windows in the uppermost three stories to be enlarged and the creation of new window openings in the east elevation. She reiterated the Board's position that the building's lower two stories are the most significant and that the windows under consideration are an important design feature.

Mr. Grier expressed his concern about the non-residential height of the existing window openings. He commented on the difficulty of relating the window openings in the lower two stories to those in the later addition above and stated his belief that the proposed design was successful in this respect. He felt his team should have some architectural license and not have items dictated to it by the Board.

Ms. Sullebarger and Mr. Raser stated that they felt the Board had met the developers in the middle in regards to design. Mr. Raser pointed out that the view from the second floor units was of a

parking lot and that the middle unit would be the lowest priced in the building regardless of changes made to the windows. He stated this situation is common in condominium sales and usually taken into consideration when pricing the units.

Mr. Kreider stated the applicant's design has come a long way from the original design and while the center unit is the least saleable, it should not be rendered economically infeasible.

Ms. Sullebarger identified the two-story base of 520 Reading Road as the original structure and more architecturally significant portion of the structure. She made the motion to retain the two single openings in the end bays on the second story and to permit changes as proposed to the fenestration in the center openings on the second story and the upper three stories. Ms. Sullebarger's motion included staff recommendations regarding treatment of masonry and the roof deck. Ms. Spraul-Schmidt seconded the motion.

BOARD ACTION

The Board voted unanimously (motion by Sullebarger, second by Spraul-Schmidt) to approve a Certificate of Appropriateness for the residential conversion of 520 Reading Road with the following conditions:

1. The exterior brick walls shall not be painted.
2. The stucco on the east elevation shall have a smooth finish.
3. The roof deck railing shall not be visible from the public right-of-way.
4. Alterations to the building fenestration shall be permitted as follows:
 - a. The original single openings in the end bays of the second story shall be retained without alteration to their size / dimensions, and
 - b. The central band of five windows in the second story and the fenestration in the third through fifth stories may be altered as proposed in the submitted plans and drawings

Finding that the upper three-story addition is not as significant as the original Art Deco two-story structure and retaining the two small second story windows preserves a significant character defining feature of the original design.

5. Final construction drawings and material/product selections shall be submitted to the Urban Conservator for review and approval prior to construction.
6. Approval of the Certificate of Appropriateness is limited to a two-year period beginning on June 26, 2006.

ADJOURN

As there were no other items for consideration by the Board, the meeting adjourned.

William L. Forwood
Urban Conservator

John C. Senhauser
Chairman

Date: _____